DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 377 560 EA 026 353

AUTHOR	David, Jane L.
TITLE	Transforming State Education Agencies To Support Education Reform.
INSTITUTION	National Governors' Association, Washington, DC. Center for Policy Research.
SPONS AGENCY	Annie E. Casey Foundation, Greenwich, CT.
REPORT NO	ISBN-1-55877-198-0
PUB DATE	94
NOTE	53p.
AVAILABLE FROM	National Governors' Association, 444 North Capitol Street, Washington, DC 20001-1512.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Evaluative/Feasibility (142) -- Collected Works - Conference Proceedings (021)
EDRS PRICE	MF01 Plus Postage. PC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	Educational Change; Elementary Secondary Education; Resistance to Change; *School Restructuring; *State Action; *State Agencies; *State Departments of Education; *State Government

ABSTRACT

To answer the question of how to build the capacity of state and local educational systems to implement systemic reform, the National Governors' Association (NGA) convened two meetings of educators and policymakers and commissioned three supporting papers from knowledgeable educators. This volume contains an overview report of the conferences and includes the following three papers: (1) "State Education Agencies: Partners in Reform" (Paul G. LeMahieu and Bonnie A. Lesley); (2) "A View from the Cities: State Reform, Technical Assistance, and Professional Development" (Michael D. Casserly); and (3) "An Analysis of Survey Data on the Transformation of State Departments of Education" (John T. MacDonald). Meeting participants focused on the dual challenge facing state education agencies (SEAs) as they try to transform themselves and simultaneously help local education agencies undertake similar changes. It is recommended that SEAs change their conceptions of professional development for administrators and teachers, as well as their communication and organizational structures. Given the complex array of internal and external barriers, SEAs must change their functions from monitoring to assisting and from service delivery to collaboration and the empowerment of others. Governors can strengthen the potential of systemic reform by publicizing the importance of educational reform, promoting investment in the development of the education work force, and pressing for the elimination of unnecessary federal regulations. Eight figures are included. Appendices contain a list of meeting participants and the three supporting papers. (LMI)

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NATIONAL GOVERNORS ASSOCIATION

Transforming State Education Agencies to Support Education Reform

CAPACITY for change

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NATIONAL GOVERNORS' ASSOCIATION

Education Policy Studies

Center for Policy Research

Transforming State Education Agencies to Support Education Reform

by Jane L. David

Since their initial meeting in 1908 to discuss interstate water problems, the Governors have worked through the National Governors' Association to deal collectively with issues of public policy and governance. The association's ongoing mission is to support the work of the Governors by providing a bipartisan forum to help shape and implement national policy and to solve state problems.

The members of the National Governors' Association are the Governors of the fifty states, the territories of American Samoa, Guam, and the Virgin Islands, and the commonwealths of the Northern Mariana Islands and Puerto Rico. The association has a nine-member Executive Committee, a Task Force on State Management, and three standing committees—on Economic Development and Commerce, Human Resources, and Natural Resources. Through NGA's committees, the Governors examine and develop policy and address key state and national issues. Special task forces often are created to focus gubernatorial attention on federal legislation or on state-level issues.

The association works closely with the administration and Congress on state-federal policy issues through its offices in the Hall of the States in Washington, D.C. The association serves as a vehicle for sharing knowledge of innovative programs among the states and provides technical assistance and consultant services to Governors on a wide range of management and policy issues.

The Center for Policy Research is the research and development arm of NGA. The center is a vehicle for sharing knowledge about innovative state activities, exploring the impact of federal initiatives on state government, and providing technical assistance to states. The center works in a number of policy fields, including agriculture and rural development, economic development, education, energy and environment, health, information management, social services, trade, training and employment, and transportation. The priorities for the association's research are set by the Governors.

ISBN 1-55877-198-0

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Funding for this publication was provided by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

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Printed in the United States of America.

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Foreword

Many states have been actively involved in a fundamental reform and restructuring of American education since the publication of *A Nation at Risk* in 1983. These efforts expanded after the Governors established the National Education Goals in 1990. The passage of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act codifies the National Education Goals and provides support for states and local districts to develop standards for student performance that will ensure achievement of the goals. The recently enacted School-to-Work Opportunities Act challenges states to create systems of school-to-work transition that restructure academic and vocational learning into a comprehensive curriculum.

Implicit in the challenge to meet the National Education Goals is a need to increase the capacity of school systems to develop curriculum, change instructional practices, and create new structures for schooling that enhance student learning. Creating this kind of capacity requires an overhaul in the way state education agencies conduct their business, both internally and with schools and districts.

To answer the question of how to build the capacity of state and local educational systems to implement systemic reform, the National Governors' Association (NGA) convened two meetings of educators and policymakers and commissioned three supporting papers from knowledgeable educators. This work was generously supported by a grant from the Annie E. Casey Foundation. This volume contains an overview report, "Transforming State Education Agencies to Support Education Reform" by Jane L. David, and the three supporting papers.

The meeting participants and authors were asked to address a wide range of questions on the types of technical assistance and professional development that educators at the state and local levels will need to implement and sustain systemic reform, as well as the ways to provide the needed assistance. The central questions for this effort include the following.

- What do state education agencies need to do to support systemic reform?
- What do teachers, school administrators, and district officials need to know and be able to do to build an education system based on high standards for all students?
- What are the professional development needs of educators in large urban districts?
- How can state education agencies help build local capacity for education reform?
- What barriers do state education agencies face as they try to build local capacity for change?
- What can Governors do to support the development of state and local capacity for education reform?

The report, *Transforming State Education Agencies to Support Education Reform* by Jane L. David, summarizes the responses of the meeting participants and the supporting authors to these questions. It focuses on the dual challenges facing state education agencies as they attempt to transform themselves to assume the roles and responsibilities required by systemic reform and assist others in a similar transformation as they build the local capacity to implement and sustain reform. To meet these challenges, state education agencies must change the way they perceive themselves and how they work. They need to develop new approaches to support teachers, schools, and districts that are based on effective models of professional development.

The supporting papers were commissioned by NGA to provide different perspectives on the role of state education agencies in providing professional development and technical assistance. In "State Education Agencies: Partners in Reform," Paul G. LeMahieu of the Delaware Education Research and Development Center and Bonnie A. Lesley of the Delaware Department of Public Instruction argue that the state education agency has a strong role to play in supporting system education reform by providing leadership for change, facilitating change in schools and districts, and providing adequate incentives and flexibility for change. In "A View from the Cities: State Reform, Technical Assistance, and Professional Development," Michael D. Casserly of the Council of the Great City Schools addresses the historical division between state departments of education and large urban districts. Urban districts face the dilemma of needing specialized professional development and technical assistance and of being so large that effective attempts to assist them would absorb the lion's share of state agency resources. The author argues that states and the federal government need to pay greater attention to the needs of these districts and create new mechanisms for assisting them. In "An Analysis of Survey Data on the Transformation of State Departments of Education," John T. MacDonald of the Council of Chief State School Officers provides an overview of where state education agencies are in the process of transforming and the different approaches they are developing to meet the needs of local schools and districts.

Together these papers help clarify the demands for professional development and technical assistance created by systemic education reform and the changes in state education agencies required to meet these demands. Current thinking on professional development suggests a different role for state education agencies than they have played in the past. State education agencies should provide ideas, encouragement, and assistance for local change, adopting a more flexible and collaborative approach. Teachers and administrators need to be full partners in creating better, more meaningful professional development opportunities. New forms of communication and networking need to be built into assistance strategies. These changes will require a redefinition of what state education agencies are about and their relationship to teachers, schools, and districts.

This volume is part of a larger series of reports on professional development published by the National Governors' Association. The series, "Capacity for Change," is intended to help national, state, and local policymakers and educators examine the issue of professional development within the context of systemic education reform.

Paul Goren, Director
Education Policy Studies
National Governors' Association

Acknowledgements

The National Governors' Association (NGA) is grateful to the Annie E. Casey Foundation for its generous support of this project on professional development and the role of state education agencies in building local capacity for change. The project included two working meetings of researchers, practitioners, and policymakers, three commissioned papers, and the preparation of this report. This report is part of an NGA series "Capacity for Change."

This report reflects the perspectives of the educators, policymakers, and researchers who so graciously communicated their vision of the role state education agencies can play in providing support to local districts and schools and of the kinds of professional development opportunities they have found rewarding. Through conversations with them, a consensus emerged on how to support systemic reform and local capacity building that promises to enhance educational change. NGA appreciates the time and effort these individuals contributed to refining the understanding of the role of state education agencies and the need for professional development.

Special thanks to Jane David of the Bay Area Research Group who attended all the meetings, faithfully recorded participants' views, and compiled the information for this summary report.

Thanks also to the authors of the three supporting papers, Michael Casserly of the Council of the Great City Schools, Paul LeMahieu of the Delaware Education Research and Development Center and Bonnie Lesley of the Delaware Department of Public Instruction, and John MacDonald of the Council of Chief State School Officers. The information they provided added context and saliency to this report.

Within NGA a number of people supported the publication of this document. Paul Goren coordinated the project, set the agendas for discussion, and convened the participants. Susan Traiman, Barry Van Lare, and Patricia Brown provided strategic feedback on the project and this report. Additional assistance was provided by Francine Matthews.

Executive Summary

With the adoption of the National Education Goals in 1990, the Governors launched an ambitious agenda for transforming the education system. As states implement systemic reform, they need to build the capacity of the agencies that comprise the system and the people who work in them. Classrooms, schools, districts, and state education agencies face parallel transformations demanded by challenging goals for student learning. New instructional practices require new school organizations, which in turn require new kinds of support and assistance.

State education agencies confront an array of new tasks under the reform agenda, from developing high standards to building local capacity. They face a dual challenge, for they must transform their own organizations to take on new roles and simultaneously lead and support schools and districts to do the same. The passage of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act and the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act intensify this challenge.

State education agencies must overcome a staggering array of internal and external barriers to shift from their deeply ingrained roles of regulating and monitoring to new forms of support. At the same time, the barriers facing transformation inside schools and districts are formidable, especially in large cities, and cannot be overcome by traditional modes of technical assistance and professional development.

Overcoming these barriers and transforming the roles and knowledge of educators require a dramatic shift in traditional conceptions of technical assistance and professional development. Both need to provide for adults the kinds of challenging learning opportunities systemic reform envisions for students.

State education agencies cannot by themselves create and support a new conception of professional development for administrators and teachers, as well as the communication and organizational structures that undergird systemwide change. To make progress, they must not only change from monitoring to assisting, they also must change from a model of delivering services to one of enabling and collaborating with others. State education agencies must look for ways to form new collaborations and networks with other agencies and with schools and districts.

Governors play a critical role in stimulating and lending credibility to new kinds of collaborations and cross-cutting structures. Governors can greatly strengthen the potential of systemic reform to improve education by keeping its importance in the public eye, by promoting the value of investing in the development of the education workforce, and by pressing for the elimination of unnecessary regulatory barriers. By focusing on the supports needed to achieve the goals of reform, Governors and state education agencies together can create the new approaches to capacity building that systemic reform requires.

Introduction

With the adoption of the National Education Goals in 1990, the Governors launched a new and ambitious agenda for transforming the education system. This includes aligning curriculum, instruction, and assessment; designing new school governance arrangements; developing accountability and finance mechanisms; and developing coordinated social services for children. To implement this systemic reform agenda, states must build both organizational and individual capacity throughout the system—in schools, district offices, and state agencies—to handle new and different roles and responsibilities.

Systemic reform requires transformation at every level of the system. World-class learning goals for students require new teaching practices and new school organizations, which in turn require new kinds of support and assistance from districts and states. For state agencies, this poses a dual challenge: transforming their own organizations to assume new roles and responsibilities while leading and supporting schools and districts to do the same.

State education agencies face an array of new tasks in implementing systemic reform agendas, including the development of high standards for all students and guidance and support for creating and implementing challenging curriculum, instruction, and assessments. These new responsibilities also include more delegation of authority to districts and schools and the creation of collaborative arrangements with other state agencies to meet the growing needs of children and families, especially in large urban areas. The passage of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act and the School-to-Work Opportunities Act, as well as the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, will increase these responsibilities.

These new roles differ substantially from the dominant regulatory and monitoring roles traditionally performed by state education agencies. Changing their focus and carrying out these new functions will require major changes in the organization of state education agencies and in the roles of their staff. These new responsibilities also require changes in relationships within the agency and with other agencies and the field. As states that already are implementing systemic reform are discovering, this is no small challenge. Even with a legislative mandate to create a transformed education agency, Kentucky finds itself recreating bureaucratic ways of operating in its new department of education (see Figure 1).

At the same time, the barriers facing transformation inside schools and districts are formidable, especially in large cities, and cannot be overcome by traditional modes of technical assistance and professional development (see Figure 2). Overcoming these barriers and transforming the roles and knowledge of educators require a dramatic shift in traditional conceptions of technical assistance and professional development.

To help build local capacity, state education agencies need to transform themselves, support a new conception of professional development for administrators and teachers, and create new communication and organizational structures to undergird systemwide change.

How can state education agencies meet these challenges? Can they transform their own ways of operating while leading and assisting districts and schools to do the same? What kinds of support and assistance do educators need to implement systemic reform and improve educational outcomes for children? What are some alternative structures and mechanisms that states can create to support local capacity building? What can Governors do to inspire and support these efforts?

To answer these questions, the National Governors' Association (NGA) convened two meetings and commissioned three papers[1] with support from the Annie E. Casey Foundation (see Appendixes A and B). The meetings included the heads of several state agencies that have attempted major reorganizations and Governors' policy advisors, as well as those knowledgeable about the professional development and technical assistance needs of educators in districts and schools.

Figure 1
Challenges in Implementing Systemic Reform: Early Observations from Kentucky

In the fall of 1992, the National Governors' Association and Kentucky's Prichard Committee, supported by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, brought together a group of researchers, consultants, and policy analysts to pool their knowledge and insights about the early stages of implementation of the Kentucky Education Reform Act (KERA). The group identified five interrelated challenges that will confront any state effort to implement systemic reform.

Capacity Building. Create the capacity at all levels of the system to carry out the new roles and responsibilities demanded by KERA and redefine professional development in ways that accomplish this.

Timing and Sequencing. Ensure that the components of KERA are implemented in a sequence that makes sense, given that they are all related but cannot be implemented simultaneously. For example, put curriculum guidance and professional development in place before basing judgments on new assessments.

Recreating Bureaucracy. Avoid the temptation to recreate bureaucratic ways of operating at the state level and encourage the same in schools and districts. Find the right balance between structure from the top and discretion at the bottom.

Maintaining Broad Support. Create realistic expectations for implementation and results and build support among educators and the public.

Continuous Learning and Adaptation. Develop mechanisms that allow ongoing feedback about progress and barriers and maintain a balance between making needed adjustments without compromising the integrity and intent of the legislation.

Source: Jane L. David, *Redesigning an Education System: Early Observations from Kentucky* (Washington, D.C.: National Governors' Association, 1993).

Figure 2
Barriers to Education Reform

The work of the National Governors' Association over the last few years has revealed that changing the entire system from bottom to top is a much harder task than anyone had anticipated. This is especially the case where budgets are tight, but it is also difficult where budgets are growing. It is easier to talk about and develop policies on new standards and assessments than it is to implement them and to support the necessary changes inside classrooms, schools, communities, districts, and state agencies to reach new goals. There are signs of progress and a handful of striking local success stories. Yet the successes remain few and they tend to be in fairly well-to-do schools, not in those overwhelmed with issues of racism, poverty, and violence.

In Transforming Education: Overcoming Barriers, *five categories of barriers to reform are identified as particularly prevalent and significant from the perspective of local educators.*

Lack of clear direction. Educators and students get very mixed signals about what matters as new demands are layered on top of old ways of testing students, evaluating teachers, and organizing curriculum and instruction.

Weak incentives for change. Incentives for educators and students to change are weak, especially in schools and systems coping with increasingly severe problems of poverty and racial conflict. These schools must struggle to meet the basic needs of the population for food, clothing, health, and safety before they can turn to issues of learning.

Regulatory and compliance mentality. Many existing local, state, and federal regulations, including union contracts, reinforce traditional goals, practices, and measurement focused on procedures rather than results.

Limited learning opportunities for educators. There are few worthwhile opportunities for teachers and administrators to learn new ways of teaching, organizing schools, and supporting change. Those that do exist are based on simplistic models inappropriate to the challenge of transforming organizations and roles in significant ways.

Poor communication. There is little exchange across levels of the education system, within schools, and between schools and their communities. Without an infrastructure for sharing knowledge, information, and problems, systems cannot improve.

Source: Jane L. David and Paul D. Goren, *Transforming Education: Overcoming Barriers* (Washington, D.C.: National Governors' Association, 1993).

The meetings and supporting papers offer both state and local perspectives on the challenges facing state education agency transformation and on the needs of districts and schools that are attempting to restructure.[2] A critical focus of these discussions was the special or unmet needs of districts in large urban areas.

Based on these meetings and supporting papers, this report reviews the major issues facing state education agencies trying to implement systemic reform and the new roles they must assume. The barriers state education agencies encounter when they attempt to transform themselves are described in Chapter 2. The focus shifts to the local level in Chapter 3, looking at how professional development and technical assistance need to change to equip educators to meet challenging goals for student learning. The new roles state education agencies need to assume as they shift from a monitoring role to one of assistance and from a service delivery role to one of enabling and collaboration are explored in Chapter 4. The Governor's critical role in inspiring and facilitating the changes in attitudes and roles essential for building the capacity to implement systemic reform is examined in Chapter 5.

Transforming the State Education Agency: Barriers to Change

Leaders of state education agencies in the vanguard of systemic reform face an overwhelming set of internal and external barriers in transforming their agencies to implement reform statewide and to build the capacity for change throughout the system (see Figure 3). They have made some strides in redefining the mission, roles, and responsibilities of their agencies. Faced with such large obstacles to change, there are limits to what state education agencies can do. The limits on how far they can progress suggest the need for a more radical redefinition of their role, especially as more state education agencies assume the responsibility for implementing systemic reform under the Goals 2000 legislation.

Some state education agencies are changing how they are organized internally and how they perceive their primary functions and responsibilities. In these agencies, leaders are setting goals that shift their organizations from generating and enforcing rules to guiding and supporting districts and schools in their transformation efforts. For example, the Virginia Department of Education was reorganized in 1990 "to redirect the mission of the department from regulating and monitoring school divisions to providing leadership, assessing results, and creating a support mechanism for school reform," according to a state report.

The organizational charts of transforming state education agencies tend to be wider and shallower than before, reflecting a reduction in the number of administrative levels and often in the number of job classifications. These agencies are forming teams and ad hoc problemsolving task forces that cut across traditional program boundaries. Such collaborative efforts are designed to increase integration across programs and to break down the fiefdoms that result in fragmented enterprises inside agencies, districts, and schools. The titles of jobs and the names of organizational units also reflect this new philosophy; for example, "accountability and decentralization" and "learning results services" have replaced "administration" and "instruction."

Like many corporations that are restructuring, state education agencies are downsizing, which means fewer people to do the same or more work. This severely limits the time and energy available to learn new roles. Moreover, reductions in staff tend to affect primarily those supported by state funds, increasing the proportion of staff who are federally supported.

Staff supported by federal dollars have little incentive to change. Many were hired as compliance monitors years ago and have an established way of doing business. Like district administrators and school staff, they have lived through numerous changes in leadership as elected officials have come and gone, and through many waves of reform. Many view the federal government, not the state education agency, as the boss and their regulatory role as providing an important protection for the populations they serve.

Figure 3

Barriers to State Education Agency Transformation

More work for fewer people as a result of downsizing.

A large percentage of federally funded positions with compliance monitoring obligations.

Auditing and reporting obligations to the state legislature.

A state personnel system with promotion and transfer based on seniority.

Lower salaries than most large school districts.

Limited diversity of staff and experience with urban districts.

Few opportunities for professional development.

Inability to cut programs.

Source: Meeting on *"Transforming State Agencies to Support Systemic Education Reform"* held in Cincinnati, Ohio, December 15, 1993, with funding from the Annie E. Casey Foundation. The meeting participants are listed in Appendix A.

The percentage of total positions in state education agencies supported by federal funds ranges from approximately 35 percent to 80 percent. The percentage of professional positions supported by federal dollars is even higher, and it is increasing in states where there are reductions in state-funded positions. The higher the proportion of federally funded positions, the more difficult it becomes to transform the role of staff from compliance monitoring to one of support and assistance. One state education director described the two-thirds of his staff who are federally funded as having "another agenda" and "a mentality that resists involvement."

State legislation often requires state education agencies to provide evidence of their oversight responsibilities, from audit trails to annual progress reports, which sustains traditional bureaucratic styles of operating. One state education agency leader reported that in one year, the legislature enacted seventy to eighty laws requiring regular progress reports to the legislative oversight committee. Such oversight requirements persist even when they are demonstrably ineffective. Another state education agency leader noted that for years, his staff has used a system to evaluate districts and schools that continues to find everyone in compliance with "good practice."

State education agencies are hampered in their ability to attract top professionals because of state personnel systems. Typically, state education agencies cannot offer salaries competitive with those of the largest school districts in their state. One result is that few state staff are representative of, or even familiar with, urban districts. Civil service seniority rules also restrict choices in hiring, transfers, and promotions.

Significant transformation of agency roles also is constrained by insufficient time and money to support staff retraining and development. Often state education staff do not have easy access to research findings and the rapidly increasing knowledge base on learning, teaching, and organizational change. Like their

local counterparts, they suffer from the fact that the public and their legislative representatives do not value highly investments in staff development activities. Diverting resources from less effective programs for staff retraining proves extremely difficult because every program has a booster club, often housed in the legislature. Moreover, program failure is likely to be attributed to the state education agency, not to any inherent weakness in the original proposal enacted by the legislature.

Caught between a reduced staff with ongoing compliance monitoring obligations—especially for federally funded programs—and a lack of resources for retraining, state agencies are facing a major uphill battle in their efforts to change from old familiar duties to vastly different roles and ways of operating. Even in Kentucky, which had the opportunity to rebuild its education department, traditions and ingrained ways of doing business—from state personnel systems to reporting requirements mandated by the legislature—have resulted in the recreation of a bureaucratic organization.

In some states where state education agencies have taken the lead in setting new goals and standards, there is organized public opposition to elements of the reform agenda. State education agencies face the dual challenge of creating new, more challenging standards and assessments and of gaining public support for the new directions. Building a high level of public support is difficult when state leaders are facing many voters without children in the schools, parents who may not feel part of the latest reform trends, and critics who disagree with the substance of the reform agenda.

These barriers suggest that state education agencies will neither be able to transform themselves quickly nor to assume all of the new developmental and assistance roles demanded by systemic reform. Yet state education agencies remain central to the task of implementing systemic reform and, in fact, they become even more central under the Goals 2000 legislation. The act requires a statewide strategy for professional development as a key element in the state plan for systemic reform.

Given state education agencies' central role in creating capacity at the local level and given the host of barriers that constrain their capacity to change, what options are available to them? If state education agencies cannot do it all, what roles and functions can they do well, which are the most important, and who can pick up the slack? To answer these questions requires understanding that the kinds of professional development and assistance needed by teachers and administrators to build local capacity for systemic reform are very different from traditional practice. This new conception of capacity building in turn calls for a new role for the state education agency as an enabler and collaborator rather than a regulator and service provider.

Building Local Capacity: The Need for New Approaches

Understanding how state education agencies can contribute best to building local capacity for change rests on understanding the kinds of professional development and assistance that are effective in helping district and school staff meet the goals of systemic reform. Neither the structure and content nor the pedagogy of most current professional development and technical assistance activities are well-suited to meet these needs. Practices that are effective imply a new role for districts and states.

Local education agencies, especially large school districts, need help to overcome many of the same barriers that state education agencies face. Few local administrators are accustomed to a support and assistance role, and they have limited access to the kind of professional development and assistance that would help them make this major shift.

Like state education agencies, district restructuring typically is accompanied by substantial downsizing, leaving more work for fewer people in the district office and increasing the workload at the school site. Federal- and state-funded programs operate as disconnected fiefdoms in the central office, mirroring the fragmentation within the state education agency. The primary allegiance of staff is to the funding agency and the target population, not to an agenda of systemic reform.

At the school level, the goals of systemic reform demand substantial changes in school organization and instructional practices. Teaching for understanding and leading and managing organizational change require very different kinds of preparation, skills, and knowledge than most educators have. Teachers and administrators are being asked not only to change how they teach and manage, but also to assume additional roles such as site-based decisionmaking and schoolwide planning. Teachers are also faced with learning how to use a variety of new technologies that did not even exist when they were students.

For teachers and administrators to adopt these new roles and acquire the new knowledge and skills required of them, professional development and technical assistance practices need to change dramatically. Both need to mirror for adults the kinds of challenging learning opportunities systemic reform envisions for students. Incentives to participate in professional development activities, which now encourage individuals to attend workshops and courses for salary advancement with little or no connection to goals for student learning or schoolwide transformation, also must change.

Traditional approaches to professional development and school improvement, such as one-shot workshops delivered or brokered by the state, local agencies, or outside "experts," and an array of disconnected university course offerings cannot meet the challenge of substantially changing the roles and practices of educators (see Figure 4). Acquiring the new knowledge and skills needed to transform individual practice and collective organizational behavior requires ongoing access to new ideas and practices. Similarly, the shift in district administrative roles from rulemaking and monitoring to support and assistance to schools is a long-term process of changing goals, beliefs, and practices.

Much of the discussion of professional development rightly focuses on the needs of teachers—those who interact most directly with students. Yet schools that have made the most progress in transforming curriculum and instruction to challenge all students tend to be those with strong administrators who inspire, cajole, and organize for change. Administrators, especially principals, need opportunities to learn to lead and manage organizational change.

Professional development needs to become much more integral to the daily lives of teachers and administrators, not something tacked onto the end of the school day or offered on a few designated days. It needs to be understood as an ongoing part of the job, with time for both individual and collaborative learning. It should be viewed as critical to the overall mission of the school and district, not as a means for individual salary enhancement. Professional development needs to be responsive to the varied needs and priorities of different individuals, schools, and districts.

Examples of professional development activities that meet some of these criteria exist, but they represent a fraction of professional development activity and they are not part of systems created to build capacity (see Figure 5). Importantly, these examples all require considerable investment of time by teachers and administrators. This in turn requires the public, policymakers, and even educators to understand that teachers must spend part of their workday away from students in order to be effective.

Designing and implementing effective approaches to professional development and assistance is difficult everywhere, but it is especially so in inner-city schools. In urban areas, barriers to learning associated with poverty, racism, hunger, high mobility, and violence may demand attention before issues of curriculum and instruction can be tackled. To the extent that resources are allocated on a per student basis and not according to need, many urban schools will fall further behind their suburban counterparts.

Creating a system to build local capacity means moving away from traditional professional development that focuses on individuals and traditional technical assistance that focuses on programs. In their place, schools, districts, and state education agencies must develop capacity-building strategies to recognize accomplished practice and spread this information from a few teachers to many inside schools and from one school to another. This view of building local capacity suggests a very different role for state education agencies than they have played in the past.

Figure 4

Limitations of Traditional Approaches to Professional Development

Individual rather than collaborative and collective.

Removed from school context.

Not tied to schoolwide needs and goals.

Skills-based not inquiry-based.

One-shot not ongoing.

Packaged and standardized.

Administrators overlooked.

Fragmented not coherent.

Choices constrained by district or state.

Motivated by salary increase not improvement.

Figure 5

Effective Strategies for Professional Learning

Effective strategies share a set of assumptions about adult learning that parallel principles for student learning. They are situated in real schools and classrooms, based on learning by doing, continuous and generative, and collaborative. Examples of current practices that incorporate these assumptions include the following.

Summer institutes with students and accomplished teachers that provide intensive and focused opportunities for teachers to learn and practice new approaches, from integrating technology into the curriculum to hands-on science.

Collaborative networks that facilitate face-to-face or electronic communication, sharing, and joint design work defined by proximity, professional affiliation (e.g., subject-matter associations), funding sources, or other shared interests.

Leadership academies and principal centers that provide ongoing opportunities for administrator and teacher leaders to learn from one another and from those in non-educational settings.

Curriculum and assessment development opportunities that engage teachers in creating curriculum frameworks, designing curriculum and materials, developing assessment tasks, establishing criteria for portfolio content, and scoring rubrics.

Development centers in schools where visiting teams of teachers observe and discuss accomplished practice in structured week-long visits with followup support.

Forging a New Role for State Education Agencies

The new conception of professional development and technical assistance required by new learning goals implies a new role for state education agencies in building local capacity. No longer can a single agency begin to meet the enormous and varied demands. Instead, the role of the state education agency needs to change to one that helps create the necessary conditions for adult learning and builds on the expertise of others throughout the system by facilitating learning, sharing, and collaboration.

The new role is more than a shift from monitoring to helping; it is a redefinition of what helping means and where it comes from. The traditional role of the state education agency as a provider or broker of services to individual teachers and program staff cannot begin to meet the broad and diverse needs for building local capacity for systemic reform. Instead of hiring curriculum experts, approving vendors, and establishing credits for coursework, the state education agency needs to become an enabling institution, supporting activities and choices at the school level, facilitating communication among educators, and providing opportunities for educators to participate in the development of new curricula and assessments.

To build their capacity and expand their expertise and resources to support local capacity building, some state education agencies are collaborating with other state and local players. These include interagency collaborations for coordinating services to children and families, new bridges between state education agencies and institutions of higher education, and partnerships between state education agencies and local districts (see Figure 6).

Enabling and supporting local capacity building also includes removing constraints created by legal mandates and regulations, particularly those that inhibit the flexible use of time, prohibit the merging of staff development funds across programs, and specify what constitutes allowable activities. Mounting pressure to increase contact time between teachers and students makes it essential for state education agencies to encourage and protect the use of flexible scheduling and staffing arrangements that enable teachers to interact professionally during the workday for planning and consultation.

To build local capacity, state education agencies must ensure that educators have opportunities to observe accomplished practice and access to knowledge and help. Where help is needed but not requested, state education agencies also have an obligation to create a demand for knowledge and help. State education agencies can work collaboratively with schools by providing a structure for self-assessment and access to assistance from colleagues who act as critical friends. For example, New York's School Quality Review offers schools the opportunity to construct their own accountability plan with flexibility granted by the state education agency.

Telecommunications also provides a vehicle for sharing new knowledge. Teachers can use computer-based networks to find specific information, ask questions, read articles, and exchange ideas with their peers and with

university faculty, researchers, and other resources. Several states, including Florida, Texas, and Virginia, now have statewide networks. For example, the Texas Education Network (TENET) provides toll-free access to a statewide network that connects to many other major networks. The more than 32,000 educators who have signed on since 1991 use the system to communicate inside schools and to access information from university libraries and from news and information services. Coupled with existing and emerging national networks such as NEA On-Line, ShareNet, and others accessible through the Internet, the potential for sharing information and resources is enormous. Whether or not a state education agency sponsors the creation of a network, the agency can play a powerful role in ensuring that all schools have access to the necessary hardware, software, and training to participate in this new form of communication.

Professionals learn from participating in research and development activities related to their work and from working with one another on specific projects. State education agencies can help create conditions that facilitate professional communication and provide opportunities for teachers to construct curriculum, materials, and instructional activities for themselves and others. In California the state department of education convenes teams from schools with state restructuring grants to learn from one another. Teams are accountable

Figure 6
Examples of New Collaborations to Enhance Local Capacity

To build internal capacity, **Delaware** has created a new entity—the Delaware Education and Research Center—that bridges the department of education and the University of Delaware and gives the state a trusted source of information on the system and an opportunity for more reflection than is usually possible in policy formulation.

To assist schools that are failing to improve, the **Kentucky** Department of Education formed a collaboration with the Gheens Professional Development Academy of the Jefferson County Public Schools and the University of Louisville to provide training for the distinguished educators who are responsible for assisting schools that are failing to improve.

To support the needs of children so they are ready for school, **New Mexico**, **Ohio**, and other states have created significant interagency collaborations in order to provide integrated services.

To develop local capacity to integrate technology, **Texas** gives incentive funds to colleges and universities that develop collaborations with schools, regional service centers, districts, and training consultants to establish centers for professional development in technology.

To develop the capacity of local educators to strengthen math, science, and technology, **Vermont's** National Science Foundation State Systemic Initiative was awarded to the state education agency but is managed by a new nonprofit agency created for that purpose. The board members are appointed by the Governor, the commissioner of education, and the commissioner of economic development and include representatives from schools, colleges, professional groups, and businesses.

for public presentations of their practices and for progress in achieving specific student outcomes, and they must respond to questions and suggestions from other teams. The school teams are responsible for sharing what they have learned with their faculties and with other schools.

Professional learning also is supported by the creation of networks of schools and teachers participating in similar activities. For example, the Urban Mathematics Collaborative brings together teachers and mathematicians in businesses and universities to provide ongoing discussion and support on issues of professional knowledge and standards. Collaboratives currently exist in fifteen major cities. State-based subject-matter associations also provide opportunities for professional exchange. A number of these national partnerships exist that link schools around shared endeavors, such as the Coalition for Essential Schools, the National Alliance for Restructuring Education, and a variety of National Science Foundation programs.

In collaboration with others, state education agencies can take on a wider range of activities than would be possible if they had to provide all the necessary professional staff time (see Figure 7). For example, state education agencies can collaborate with subject-matter associations to convene educators from all parts of the system to develop state standards for student achievement in their subject areas and to review standards created by national associations. State education agencies can work with professional associations to develop criteria for effective professional development and to build on the work of the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards as they develop mechanisms to promote high standards among educators.

State education agencies can work with others to create opportunities for the professional development of school administrators whose leadership is critical to school transformation. They can help establish networks and mentoring opportunities for principals and superintendents, including partnerships with the private sector.

In conjunction with schools, districts, researchers, and professional networks, state education agencies can support local examples of accomplished practice as development sites from which others can learn and offer incentives for districts to do the same. Similarly, there is a growing number of partnerships between institutions of higher education and local schools to create professional development schools in which experienced teachers, student teachers, and professors teach and learn collaboratively.

State education agencies also can communicate new images of teaching, learning, and managing by offering guidance on school self-evaluation and review, modeling what is

Figure 7
Collaborative Actions to Build Local Capacity

Engage in creating standards for professional development and technical assistance.

Stimulate new kinds of leadership development, especially for principals.

Cultivate exemplars and establish them as development centers.

Stimulate and support different types of professional networks.

Redefine technical assistance as helping schools construct their own agenda to achieve student learning goals.

Provide a range of support services and assistance to ensure that those most in need are prepared for school.

Learn from the field about what is and what is not effective in order to make appropriate changes.

Ensure that the incentives for professional growth match the intended purpose.

Involve teachers in developmental work such as new curriculum, assessment, and materials.

Ensure equitable access to communications hardware, software, and support.

expected, encouraging risk taking, and aligning evaluation and accountability criteria with these images. Collaborations to support accomplished practice can become a primary source for creating and spreading these images of teaching, learning, and managing.

The state education agency also can press for stronger linkages among preparation programs in higher education institutions, certification, and evaluation for both teachers and administrators. To the extent that governance arrangements for the policymaking bodies in these arenas pose barriers, Governors are in a strong position to help create bridges among them.

Strong leadership is required for state education agencies to begin to remove regulatory barriers; set priorities, especially with respect to schools most in need; and develop new collaborations and linkages (see Figure 8). Whether the chief state school officer is elected or appointed by the Governor or the state board of education, the position is critical to education reform.[3]

Finally, state education agencies must pay special attention to the unique needs of large urban districts. Strategies that encourage schools at the cutting edge must be complemented by strategies that support schools most in need of improvement. Many urban schools need to build not only their capacity for academic improvement, but also their capacity for supporting students and families with many special needs. Where poverty and racism are most prevalent, the consequences of these conditions often take precedence over academic concerns. Intervention in troubled schools should emphasize prevention and early assistance, not simply label after-the-fact failure.

State education agencies face a huge task that can be accomplished only by redefining their roles internally and externally. Through strong leadership, they can stimulate and participate in new kinds of collaborations and activities that build the capacity of districts and schools to transform education.

Figure 8
What State Education Agency Leaders Can Do

Communicate images of powerful teaching, learning, and managing.

Establish professional growth as a priority throughout the system.

Promote new conceptions of capacity building.

Stimulate collaborations that cross organizational and disciplinary boundaries.

Encourage local solutions.

Increase the flexible use of resources in schools.

What Governors Can Do

Governors are key to the success of education reform. In many places, public support for education and reform is weak. Governors can greatly strengthen the potential of systemic reform to improve student performance by keeping the importance of education reform in the public eye, by supporting the efforts of state agencies to transform and collaborate, and by pressing for the elimination of regulatory barriers.

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Collaboration between the state education agency and the Governor is essential. With no ties to a specific agency, the Governor is in the best position to forge consensus around common goals and build bridges across organizational boundaries. Governors can help set realistic expectations for reform, draw attention to the importance of professional development, and help create new structures and collaborations so the entire burden for building local capacity does not rest at the door of the state education agency.

Specifically, Governors can do the following.

- *Communicate the importance of education.* Governors need to continue to be vocal about the importance of education and the goals of reform. They can lengthen the attention span of the public by continuing to make education reform a priority. Because large segments of the population are wary or uninformed about the systemic reform agenda, gubernatorial support and attention to education is crucial to broadening the base of public support, without which no reform can succeed. One state education agency leader reports that people tell him, "You don't understand. The schools my kids attend are okay. It's the other schools that are going to hell and frankly I don't give a damn." Governors must speak to these concerns.
- *Support education workforce investment.* Governors need to stress the importance of making a long-term investment in the education workforce. Gubernatorial support will go a long way toward changing the public's perception of professional development and educational change. Currently, legislators, parents, and even educators view professional development activities as a waste of time because teachers are not in the classroom and parents have to cope with child care. Embedding professional development activities into the daily lives of educators, thereby breaking the link between professional development and closing school, also would go a long way toward changing attitudes and perceptions. Governors, in conjunction with the state education agency, might establish a broad-based task force to create a framework for professional development for the state that would begin to recast its role and purpose.
- *Lead and inspire new collaborations.* Governors have a crucial role that no one else can play in stimulating the development of, and lending credibility to, new structures to guide and support building the capacity for educational improvement. For example, Governors can support the development of independent standards councils, professional standards boards, and entities that bridge existing agencies. Strong leadership

can help overcome state education agency resistance to, and competition with, these new bodies.

More than anyone else, Governors can initiate and sustain cross-agency efforts by inviting their leaders to the table and creating new forums to address current and anticipated problems. This role of convener and facilitator will be even more important under the Goals 2000 legislation and School-to-Work Opportunities Act. Preparing children to be ready to learn when they enter school, supporting their development in and out of school, and preparing them for work and further learning require the cooperation of all agencies dealing with children and families. Without sustained gubernatorial leadership, these collaborative endeavors may prove impossible.

- *Press for regulatory reform.* Governors can help press the federal government to loosen the compliance pressures that lock state education agencies and schools into old ways of operating and to provide resources to strengthen state education agencies commensurate with their increased responsibilities under federal legislation. As a main source of monitoring and reporting requirements, the federal government needs to address the conflicts between such requirements and the charge to state education agencies under new federal legislation. Without changes in federal monitoring and reporting requirements, districts and schools will continue to receive mixed messages about reform.

  Governors also need to examine their own state's regulatory framework and consider leading a review that weighs the benefits of regulations in controlling the malfeasance of a few against the costs that the regulations incur for the many who are in compliance with the state's goals. Clearly, the areas of civil rights and health and safety require regulation to ensure that basic protections are not at risk; but in many other areas, regulations inhibit change.

As long as organizational structures and incentives stay the same, people working in state agencies, school districts, and schools are not likely to change the way they conduct business. Like schools, state education agencies face a major philosophical shift in how "good" work is defined. This shift requires a change in orientation from finding mistakes and giving the right answers to guiding, joint problem-solving, and taking risks. The headway made by teams created to solve particular problems and through new collaborations and structures with new agendas offer much promise for creating new ways of operating and of supporting teachers and administrators.

For systemic reform to succeed in strengthening the education system, organizations from classrooms to state agencies, and the individuals working within them, need support and the capacity for continuous improvement. Traditional ways of providing support and assistance, which arguably are good at informing educators of particular new strategies or requirements, are not designed to create administrators and teachers who can analyze learning environments and create new structures and practices to support high levels of achievement for all students. To create a system that can sustain and support such continuous improvement, state education agencies must transform their own missions and ways of operating and create new partnerships and strategies for supporting similar transformations in school districts and schools.

By focusing on the changes needed and the new ways of accomplishing them, Governors and state education agencies together can create the kinds of new approaches to capacity building that systemic reform requires.

Endnotes

1. The three supporting papers are "State Education Agencies: Partners in Reform" by Paul G. LeMahieu and Bonnie A. Lesley, "A View from the Cities: State Reform, Technical Assistance, and Professional Development" by Michael D. Casserly, and "An Analysis of Survey Data on the Transformation of State Departments of Education" by John T. MacDonald. These supporting papers are presented in Appendix B.

2. The state role in the preparation and licensure of teachers and administrators is critical, but the primary focus of the meetings convened by NGA and of this report is the staff who currently are in the system and who are being called upon to change the system in which they work.

3. Nineteen chief state school officers are appointed by the Governor, twenty are appointed by the state board of education, and fifteen are directly elected by the public. See Council of State Governments, *Book of the States: 1992-1993 Edition* (Lexington, Ky.: Council of State Governments, 1992), 77.

Appendix A
Participants in National Governors' Association Meetings

Transforming State Agencies to Support Systemic Education Reform

Cincinnati, Ohio, December 15, 1993

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Wayne Powell
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Joseph A. Spagnolo
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Robert L. Wehling
The Procter & Gamble Company
Cincinnati, Ohio

Gene Wilhoit
Arkansas Department of Education
Little Rock, Arkansas

Albert Zamora
New Mexico Department of Education
Sante Fe, New Mexico

Transforming State Departments of Education: New Approaches to Providing Professional Development and Technical Assistance

Washington, D.C., January 11, 1994

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Columbia, South Carolina

Joan Baron
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Hartford, Connecticut

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Appendix B
Supporting Papers

State Education Agencies: Partners in Reform

by Paul G. LeMahieu, Delaware Education Research and Development Center and University of Delaware and Bonnie A. Lesley, Delaware Department of Public Instruction

Ironically, accelerating state involvement in educational reform—including the current wave of systemic restructuring initiatives—has permitted, and in many cases even encouraged, state education agencies to continue to behave as hierarchical, bureaucratic, and compliance-focused organizations. Conversations only recently have begun to explore how state education agencies might redefine and restructure themselves so they can more effectively support district and school efforts at reform and innovation. Newly constructed roles for state education agencies can be clustered into three essential areas: leadership, regulation, and facilitation.

Leadership

First and foremost, the establishment of goals is a leadership function within any system. Just as corporate leaders establish a vision for their organization, education leaders must first initiate, facilitate, and coordinate the setting of standards, goals, and expectations for the education system they maintain. It is extremely important that this process involve a broadly representative cross-section of the state's citizenry, including the various constituencies directly concerned about the profession. Where reforms have proven most difficult, the education establishment has created its goals, outcomes, or standards in isolation from the public, ignoring the participatory imperative of a democracy. Then it expects education professionals to enroll others—who are sometimes suspicious of the establishment's vision for the students and the system. State education agencies should lead the public's definition and endorsement of both curricula content and performance standards for students; the professional standards that govern admission to practice; the opportunity-to-learn standards for schools; and through them all the expectations for schools and the education system.

A second function of state education agency leadership is political—the establishment and maintenance of support for public education in general, for systemic restructuring and the transformation of practice in particular, as well as for specific policy actions as they arise. State education agency leaders are responsible, for example, for communicating with and informing policymakers (e.g., Governors, legislators, board members, and other officials) to enlist their understanding of and support for educational action. The state education agency must provide leadership in building coalitions on behalf of education that extend beyond the education establishment, and it should also serve as an advocate for responsible policy and for both adequate and equitable resources for the educational enterprise. State education agency leaders should be involved in interagency collaborations and related efforts to leverage resources for child and family services. State education agencies' input on

federal legislation and regulation, as well as their administration of federal programs, are other aspects of political leadership.

A third aspect of leadership pertains to the definition of roles and responsibilities as well as the administration and management of the state education agency. Just as a major responsibility of a corporate leader is to attend to the organizational health of the corporation, state education agencies must model a learning organization that transforms and renews itself so it maintains a service orientation and attends to its own capacity—knowledge, competence, and norms of operation—to facilitate district and school restructuring. Restructured state education agencies recognize the futility of inspection and compliance monitoring of districts that often lack the capacity to be effective. They further appreciate the variability of local contexts and cultures as well as capabilities among districts, and thus the futility of singular actions to solve the multiplicity of local problems. Of course, attention to the processes of education should not distract from a consuming concern for accomplishment. It indicates the locus of proper attention and action if the desired accomplishments are to be realized.

The state education agency's attention to its own organization must include the development of a shared sense of mission—and one redirected toward service—and a commitment to the vision of success for all children. The organization must refocus away from self-perpetuating function-oriented divisions toward production-oriented teams that are chartered under a negotiated scope of work and exist primarily for the achievement of an agreed-upon task. Once the task is accomplished, the team is disbanded and its resources are redirected to a new problem or task. The organization must attend to the importance of powerful intra-agency communication by fostering a culture that expects and respects quality work, values the personal and professional needs of employees, and provides support for their growth.

The restructured state education agency becomes client-focused with an orientation toward service rather than control; emphasizes continuous improvement and ongoing learning as a valued part of work activity; uses information routinely for planning and decisionmaking; decentralizes and shares decisionmaking so problems are solved expeditiously; and frequently surveys clients to assess their needs and level of satisfaction. Employees receive frequent feedback on their performance and, importantly, are also expected to assess their own work as well as contribute to the assessment of their peers and the organization. A state education agency must transform itself as a learning organization if it is to develop its capacity to provide authentic leadership and support for innovative and productive practices in districts and schools. Under its leadership mandate, the state education agency has an obligation to model the powerful ideas about organizational structure and operating norms that it advocates for the system.

Regulation

A state education agency should have clear areas of regulatory responsibility. However, virtually without exception, they are fewer and less extensive than currently defined or pursued. Fullan's admonition in this regard is wise: "You can't regulate that which is truly important." Rarely does regulation elicit any more than compliance responses. No more should be expected of it, and other deeper forms of practice are better realized through other means, such as the facilitative role discussed below. Generally, the best guidance is that regulation is appropriate only in those areas where no more is needed than uniform conformity. This tenet restricts regulation to those areas where basic protections are the aim: civil rights, health and safety, and fiscal responsibility.

Fundamental human rights and to some extent the equity imperatives that attend many current reform efforts—whether motivated by economic, social, or moral reasoning—require basic regulation of civil rights. Disappointing though it may be to recognize, the record of local agencies in such matters is woefully inadequate. Regulation becomes a viable, even necessary, option when the general welfare and the collective and individual needs of all citizens transcend the pursuits of

particular groups or local agencies. This imperative justifies the regulation of certain basic civil rights as a state education agency responsibility; it also demarks the limitations to appropriate regulation in this arena.

A second area of regulation is health and safety. Again, this domain is one in which compliance alone can ensure the basic protections to which all students and adults in our schools are entitled. In as much as the costs associated with the provision of those protections often can be subverted to address other seemingly more pressing needs, certain necessary regulations are essential to safeguard the well-being of students and those who work with them in schools.

The third and final area that should be the focus of regulation is fiscal responsibility. There is a clear need to define necessary responsibilities relative to the use of and accounting for public monies. It must be noted that the intent is not to determine programmatic content or direction. It is to protect the public interest by establishing the parameters for the proper use of funds, prudent efficiencies, and the definition of malfeasance. Compliance with respect to certain basic requirements should be adequate to preserve the public good.

In each of these areas, an effort must be made to restrain the tendency to use regulatory powers to shape programs or determine practice in the schools. It is enough to stipulate areas of programmatic interest and support, with local agencies determining the best course of action given their unique needs and contexts. Influence over practice that extends beyond this limited role must be pursued through the leadership or facilitative roles described elsewhere in this paper. These roles involve other constituents, including local leaders and practitioners, in mutual explorations of needs and best possible responses. Then state education agencies' provision of technical assistance and support for capacity building can shape the transformation of practice.

Facilitation

Many of the ideas about reform and restructuring of our schools pertain to clarifying and altering the decision and authority landscapes within the system. This reform argues for a clear sense of place for each element of the system and dedication to the contributions (and actions) appropriate to that place. Many of the suggestions offered above derive fully from that perspective. Nonetheless, there is a need to create the conditions that make success possible, conditions that in many cases do not currently exist. These conditions cannot be achieved through legislation or regulation. The need for a facilitative role for state education agencies is therefore suggested, in addition to those responsibilities already discussed.

Of all the responsibilities placed upon a restructured state education agency, none is more challenging or more demanding of new relationships and skills than its role as facilitator. Neither is any role more important or essential. Collectively, the responsibilities within this area are intended to establish the conditions that enable the performance and success of all other segments of the system.

The first facilitative responsibility is in the area of capacity building. Here a meaningful distinction is made between the terms "capacity building" and "professional development." Although the two terms often are used interchangeably, the latter more properly refers to the abilities and dispositions of the people inhabiting the system, both individually and collectively. Professional development is a subset of capacity building, which suggests a larger frame of reference. An examination of capacities also invites consideration of institutional and organizational needs and requirements. Communication capacities, including relevant technologies; reflective capacities such as research, evaluation, and their use; and the organization and use of time, are all examples of capacities that escape notice with an exclusive focus on professional development.

Yet another set of capacities relates to the organizational needs imposed by the restructuring imperatives being pursued in many places. These include various skills such as collaborative problemsolving, meeting design and facilitation, conflict resolution and positive approaches to negotiation, and organizational analysis and development. In their facilitative

role, state education agency officials must engage local educators to negotiate understandings of such needs and facilitate the meeting of those needs.

There are also profound needs in the area of professional development because educational reform must concern itself above all else with the transformation of practice. The point is to alter the experiences children have in our schools. The standards-based approach taken by many states is a necessary first step but alone it is not sufficient. The belief that dissemination of standards can lead to changes in practice assumes that the standards alone—or, for some, the standards plus attendant assessments—can illustrate desired practices sufficiently well that practitioners can follow that guidance and dramatically change the teaching in our schools. In fact, much more is needed.

In Delaware we are confronting this challenge by engaging teachers in the development of exemplars that illustrate and give life to the standards that are being promulgated (see Figure B.1). These illustrations embody all the new commonplaces of the educational experience, subsuming both content and performance standards (A and B) that are universal and common throughout the state as well as instructional practices and learning events (C and D) that are locally determined and individualized. Finally, these exemplars also make explicit consideration of the environment (E) that is necessary to realize the desired practices.

This model is an example of professional development through engagement in meaningful development activity. It seeks to capitalize on the best thinking about adult learning and change. It also provides a means to challenge practice and support its transformation without prejudice of prescribing behaviors. By involving teachers in the development of exemplars, they are challenged to construct new learning activities that can serve their own students within the frame of their own curriculum but with explicit reference to the state's content and performance standards. The model also confronts the needed changes in organization, environment, and school culture in order to see these practices implemented. The framework outlined above provides a lens to guide reflection on the practices that are created.

Consequently, these exemplars need to be used strategically within a program of professional development. They can serve as "precious texts" for educators. Every field has its precious texts. Sonnets and the blues are studied both to experience them directly and to understand the form; certain boats, buildings, and court cases are all studied by naval architects, engineers, and attorneys for similar reasons. It is necessary to provide evocative illustrations that vivify the standards for practitioners. By working with such exemplars, adapting them as appropriate to their own contexts, teachers reflect on their own practices and, most important, their own expectations of the students they serve. It is a form of case learning in which the cases are lived. The trick is to ensure that the exemplars are not construed as script, much less scripture. What is ultimately desired is a professional teaching corps that can choose wisely, adapt appropriately or, when necessary, invent similar practices that serve their students best.

A second area in which state education agencies must discharge a facilitative role concerns public accountability regarding the performance of the system. It might seem that this responsibility should be located in one of the other areas. We choose to consider it under the heading of facilitation because we recommend a form of public accounting that is radically different from those traditionally pursued, currently recommended, or recognized. Our concept places state education agencies in a genuinely facilitating role.

First, we distinguish between public accounting and accountability. By "accounting" we mean the acts of gathering, organizing, and making available for use a variety of information describing the performance of the system. "Accountability" takes that information and places it within a process of use—including planning and action. The distinction is necessary because there currently is much activity that many think of as accountability that is no more than accounting, as well as a lot of

Figure B.1

E
ENVIRONMENT AND CONTEXT

For Students:
(background, culture, language, interest, knowledge, etc.)

For Institutions:
(governance, structure, organization, use of time, etc.)

GIVENS		SUGGESTIONS	
A	**B**	**C**	**D**
WHAT?	HOW WELL?	HOW? (for students)	HOW? (for teachers)
Content Standards	Performance Standards & Assessment	Student Learning Events	Teacher Instructional Practices
Standards are universal		Instruction is individual	

public accounting that hardly qualifies because no one has thought about the evidence that can profitably inform a challenging and effective process of accountability.

To realize the full power of accountability incentives we must approach accountability as a constructivist activity. The goal is to involve various constituencies in the development of deep and commonly held understandings about the performance of the system, the reasons for that performance, the best possible ways of improving performance, and the responsibilities of each in pursuing those plans. This approach suggests radical reform of the evidentiary basis upon which accountability is founded as well as the processes through which it is pursued.

Public accountability as a constructivist exercise moves away from indicator systems that reduce the information content to the point where it supports little more than declarations of success and failure, winners and losers. It requires full information systems that support conversations that examine performance in the context of defining conditions and responses and that subject the system to deeper scrutiny more likely to influence it to improve. It also requires the proper forums and opportunities to engage many audiences in the necessary conversations. This approach will require more effort on the part of those who would seek to examine the system's performance. This seems reasonable given the demands for improvement placed on the schools and the necessity that they succeed in doing so.

This approach requires that we develop forms of public accounting that can support the necessary conversations. They must be widely perceived as adequate, fair, and intuitively understandable so the public can become involved in discussions about the educational system and its performance. These discussions must be aimed directly at those to whom the system is responsible. Currently, much of our public accounting lacks these qualities. It is not perceived as fair or adequate. It concentrates

on one type of outcome to the exclusion of many others. It is not sufficiently comprehensive to present a fair picture of performance or the contexts and conditions that influence performance to all those who need to understand the system and who, along with education professionals, might construct a course to improve performance.

The abstractions of measurement and the obfuscations of analysis render much of current accounting inaccessible to most citizens. The result is the foreclosing of any discussion—not the opening of one—and the simplistic pronouncements that educators abhor. Ironically, educators also encourage such simple-mindedness in the form of the accounting they offer. Only if accounting is intuitively understandable can we hope to involve the public in a vital discussion about the performance of the system, the conditions it faces, and appropriate responses.

Finally, accounting should be directed toward those who are accountable. Currently, teachers are more concerned with satisfying principals, principals with satisfying central administrators, administrators with their higher-ups, and so on. Once a year, superintendents face the public in events that are abstract and removed from many of the real issues of teaching and learning. If schools faced their parents, districts their communities, and states their publics in terms that were understandable, an appropriate discussion could ensue.

It is implicit in this discussion that the results of public accountings and related analyses will be used to inform efforts at ongoing improvement of the system and the various elements that comprise it. The ultimate goal of such accountings should be to increase and enrich discussions about schooling, not to simplify and thereby reduce them. Those discussions should be as far-reaching and as widely embracing as possible. Educators, parents, business leaders, community members, and the broader citizenry—or at the very least appropriate representatives—should all participate in this discourse in the interest of understanding the needs of the system as it seeks to improve as well as the ways in which each must contribute to that improvement. The data should be configured to support discussions leading to the establishment of priorities, the articulation of response options, the guidance of choices and implementation of options, and the evaluation and eventual redirection of those choices.

Only when public accounting is pursued in this way does it become reasonable to tie the ensuing discussions to more summary judgments. Judgments about individuals then can focus on things more appropriate and fair: Can those being judged see problems and issues clearly and honestly? Can they formulate adequate and appropriate responses? Do they follow through with those responses? This basis for judgment represents a much fairer form of accountability for professional educators and the system than does the perennial and often thoughtless focus on whether numbers go up or down. It also represents a much more challenging approach.

One final area of facilitative responsibility pertains to the promotion of a reflective capacity within the profession. This was touched upon above in describing the leadership role of the state education agency in transforming itself into a learning organization. By extension, the state education agency should seek to facilitate similar changes in districts and schools throughout the state. At the individual level, this can take the form of promoting teacher leadership in a variety of ways. Teacher-led inquiry, action research, and the reflection upon practice that they encourage should be pursued. Extending the ideas about learning organizations into schools and districts as communities of learners requires the development of capacities and routines for generating, organizing, and using data to inform decisionmaking. This process is the way to cultivate both the critical perspective and the capacity necessary to confront the assumptions and beliefs underlying policies and practices. The establishment of genuine learning communities requires these dispositions and abilities, and the state education agency must seek to facilitate them.

Concluding Thoughts

We conclude with two perspectives that do not fall formally within the structure of responsibilities outlined above, but nonetheless should permeate the work of the state education agency and its role within the state. Success in systemic thinking and reform will require, and therefore be evidenced by, a more genuine sharing of common purpose and the blurring of institutional boundaries and responsibilities. What is referred to in corporate reform language as "turning the company inside out" suggests that the needed changes will make the existing institutions much more permeable. This is true with respect to both individual affiliations and systemic responsibilities. This new organization may be effected through shared assignments wherein individuals located within one segment of the system have responsibilities and pursue work in others. Another device for "managing the white spaces" on the new systemic organization chart is through the establishment of entities that bridge existing institutional responsibilities.

One example of this sort of bridge entity is the Delaware Education Research and Development Center. Housed at the University of Delaware, the center is sponsored by the Business/Public Education Council and has responsibilities at the university and in the Delaware Department of Public Instruction (DPI). Its director holds appointments both on the university faculty and in DPI as a member of the state superintendent's cabinet. It is the first time that any state has taken a major policy position in its department of education, protected it with a university appointment, and equipped it with an independent research and evaluation capacity. There is immense potential to offer the state a trustworthy and trusted source of information regarding the education system—its performance, conditions, needs, and priorities. It also offers the opportunity for a higher form of policymaking and practice as the tools of reflection common to the academic community are brought inside the deliberations of practitioners at a number of venues.

Finally, the state education agency must advocate for patience and persistence in the work of school reform. By patience we recognize that the needed changes are difficult and time consuming—all the more so if they are contemplated seriously and undertaken for the purpose of promoting change that is deep, widespread, and enduring. This kind of change requires intellectual and political patience. There are thoughtful voices eloquently arguing for the needed patience, but there are powerful forces arrayed against it. The state education agency must find the courage to protect valid efforts by securing the patience that is required to succeed. Yet patience cannot become an excuse for nonperformance. The necessary argument for patience can be won only through demonstrated accomplishment and progress. Benchmarks of accomplishment must be established, committed to, and successfully realized to secure the time necessary to conclude the larger transformation of the system. To succeed in protecting the reform effort, those benchmarks must be carefully negotiated with the public in a manner involving both internal and external perspectives on what represent challenging but fair aspirations. Such negotiation is the responsibility of the state education agency.

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A View from the Cities: State Reform, Technical Assistance, and Professional Development

by Michael D. Casserly, Council of the Great City Schools

That state departments of education and large urban school systems move in different orbits within the education universe is hardly news. The same struggles and differences in interests and perspectives exist in other arenas with jurisdiction over such other areas as transportation, waste disposal, land use, employment, and tax policy. Yet the struggles within education are particularly acute because school systems typically are creations of the state, even if—in the case of the cities—the baby is often bigger than the parent. Unlike the usual laws of physics, the orbits of these two governmental levels are in constant danger of collision.

The dysfunction is not hard to understand. As perceived by the major cities, many states are driven largely by rural and suburban interests and concerns that are far less intractable than those in the big cities. Staff in the state departments of education are not routinely drawn from urban areas and most urban educators usually do not aspire to pursue careers in smaller towns, even if the range of jurisdiction and authority is larger. To the typical urban worker—whether educator, politician, or other—it is hard to leave the rough and tumble and brighter lights of the city where challenges are more palpable, though much harder to solve, to apply their talents to a more diffuse level of political needs at the state level.

What is left is a disconnection in experience, mindset, approach, and politics between city and state. More often than not, the larger cities will consider themselves and will act as "city-states." It is not hard to understand why. The combined enrollment of the largest 50 city public school districts—in the context of the nation's 15,000 school systems—is larger than any single state, and in fact would qualify as the 80th largest country of the 160 nations belonging to the United Nations. Their scale is compounded by profound levels of need (see, for example, Figure B.2).

- Some 13 percent of our aggregate enrollment is limited-English proficient (L.E.P.), with the fifty districts enrolling some 37 percent of all limited-English proficient children in the nation.
- Some 13.8 percent of our aggregate enrollment is disabled, compared with the national average of about 11 percent.
- Some 56 percent of our aggregate enrollment is eligible for a free or reduced price lunch, with nearly 30 percent of such children nationally enrolled in these fifty districts.
- Some 75 percent of our aggregate enrollment is African American, Hispanic, and Asian-American, with the fifty districts enrolling some 40 percent of all minority children.
- Some 62.1 percent of our teachers are European-American, while only 25 percent of our students are. Our shortage of teachers is two and one-half times the national average.

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- The average school building in our cities is seventy-five years old, with an aggregate capital need of some $25 billion.
- The average annual dropout rate in our cities is slightly more than twice the national average.
- Only 36 percent of our students have successfully completed a first-year course in algebra by the end of their tenth-grade year.
- Only about 32 percent of our African American and Hispanic youth score above the fiftieth percentile on a norm-referenced math or reading test.
- The levels of violence and drug abuse in our schools is higher than national averages, though the exact comparisons are hard to make statistically.

Every problem from drug abuse to crime—from dropouts to teen pregnancy—is more concentrated in these schools. Their solutions are harder to implement because of the mind-boggling diversity of interests whether racial, cultural, ethnic, economic, religious, or language; the scrutiny of an aggressive press and business community; and a level of unionization that would make other institutions, public or private, blanche.

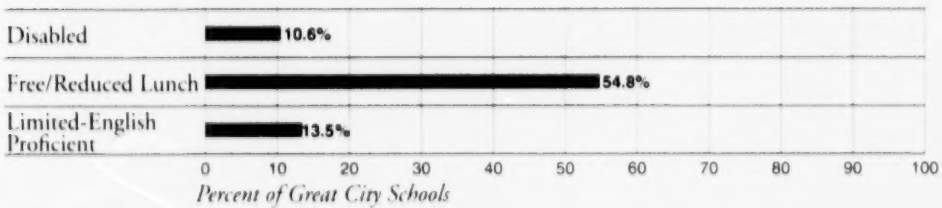
Although these differences in perspective exist across many educational areas, they are particularly keen in attempts at educational reform, particularly as it relates to restructuring, professional development, and technical assistance.

Many in the urban community believe that current state and national efforts at reform are bound for failure in the urban areas unless a serious reorientation of approach is made.

A number of federal agencies have figured out this mismatch and have attempted to do something about it, but most have been outside the main reform efforts. The first is being conducted by the National Science Foundation (NSF), which has launched parallel but interlocking state and urban reform efforts to improve the teaching of mathematics and science. The other is being orchestrated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to address similar HIV/AIDS prevention and other school health problems from both state and city levels. Both efforts are in their infancy and involve only a handful of states and citites, but the notion of pursuing reform on separate but interwoven tracks at both state and city levels makes a great deal of sense for each.

The crux of the problem for cities in the national reform movement is that most state reform efforts, including problems of professional development and technical assistance, are too generalized and simplistic for serious urban school consideration. The problem is compounded because states supply little if any more in aid to urban public schools than what one would expect on a per capita basis, usually ignoring the differential needs of the big cities.

Figure B.2
Great City School Enrollment by Special Need



N=47 school districts

Source: Council of the Great City Schools

The second prong of the problem involves the level of innovation and experimentation that city schools have taken on to solve problems that are way beyond their means to solve by themselves. Many of those innovations appear to defy the normal strictures of state, federal, and union boundaries but are being attempted by the cities for reasons of desperation if nothing else. Examples abound: multicultural education, same sex and race schools, outsourcing and contracting of both instructional and noninstructional services, open-enrollment magnets, urban school downsizing, house schools, even school-site management, alternative teacher credentialing, schoolwide projects, and on-site health clinics.

The mismatch between cities and states is likely to grow under the Goals 2000: Educate America Act, the codification of the National Education Goals, and the promotion of state content and delivery standards, unless generalized models like those being tried by NSF and CDC are attempted in the broader field of education. The disconnection was made clear by comparing the results of a recent poll that the Council of the Great City Schools conducted of its membership with the results of the annual Phi Delta Kappan polls. The number one issue of future concern cited by 67.6 percent of urban school leaders, compared with 26 percent nationally, involved implementation of new national standards and assessments. The second issue cited by 55.9 percent of urban leaders, compared with 25 percent nationally, involved matters of restructuring and managing schools.

How the states handle these two critical issues will rest in large measure on how they deal with problems of technical assistance and professional development. Addressing both needs will be critical not only for the city schools, but also for the nation's ability to meet its own education goals.

Unfortunately, the state structures for delivering technical assistance and professional development are sorely inadequate under present conditions, much less for future implementation of new standards, goals, and reforms in the nation's largest city public school systems. Current needs for both usually require urban schools to travel a road that leads to the state department of education, a regional Department of Education lab or center, or a local university that may have some formal or informal relationships with the city schools.

The problem for urban schools is that they will often have more expertise in an inner-city setting—with all its politics and complexities—than any of these entities, especially in areas requiring technical assistance. There is almost no one, for instance, in Springfield, Illinois, who has the technical wherewithall to handle the challenges and scale of the Chicago Public Schools. And the notion of pursuing "corrective action" from Springfield is akin to invading Russia on the ground (i.e., what do you do once you get inside the borders?). And if someone has the answers now, they should please step forward.

It is the feeling of many, including the Council of the Great City Schools, that solutions do not rest in questions about what new services states can offer the cities or how their services might be delivered more effectively. The truth is that the cities do not require new services from entities whose historic focus and mission has been decidedly indifferent and unresponsive to the cities and largely ignorant—however intellectually concerned—about the nature of urban challenges. And to make current state services more efficient is to miss the point entirely.

What city schools desperately need from their states, first and foremost, is funding that adequately addresses the challenges that were highlighted earlier. Yet the fact is that states are enormously resistant to investing more in urban public education, a sentiment that is as obvious in the current state-by-state equalization court cases as it was in the states' resistance to anything but substantially diluted "opportunity-to-learn" standards in Goals 2000 and other federal legislation.

During the 1980s, state revenues devoted to urban schools dropped from 14.6 percent to 14.4 percent, even though urban school

enrollments held steady at 13.1 percent of all public school children, and the poverty rate among urban school-aged children increased from 24.7 percent to 28 percent. While about 14.1 percent of state elementary and secondary revenues are devoted to urban schools, those schools have somewhere near 40 percent of the nation's at-risk children. Our poverty at the city level and the continued reliance on property taxes compound the problem.

By contrast, the federal share of all federal elementary and secondary expenditures devoted to large urban areas has steadily increased, even though it remains a small overall share of urban school revenues. This increase in share has been most acutely felt since the 1987-88 reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary School Act (ESEA) and the subsequent reauthorizations of the federal Vocational Education Act and the Drug Free Schools and Communities Act, all of which have steadily lost support at the state levels because the state is less free to dilute the funds by spreading them across the landscape to meet various state political needs. If our test scores can be used as evidence, the greater targeting—when pumped into instructional time—works, despite our remaining well behind a national average that has been called into question for being internationally substandard.

The result is that in 1990-91, the average per pupil expenditure in large urban school systems was $5,200, $5,476 in rural school systems, and $6,073 in suburban districts. The nearly $900 difference per student between the inner cities and their suburbs amounts to about $22,500 per classroom per year—enough to pay for another teacher or paraprofessional in every inner-city classroom in America or to equip every single inner-city school child with his or her own computer (see Figures B.3 and B.4).

The combination of the lag in funding and the more concentrated levels of need results in expenditure patterns that are different between cities and their suburbs. Surprisingly, cities devote as great a share of their overall budgets to total instructional services as do the suburbs (i.e., about 62 percent), and even spend a higher share on curriculum development and inservice training of teachers than the suburbs—albeit from a smaller overall pot of revenues per child. However, cities must spend considerably more on social, nutrition, and health services, whereas the suburbs are freer to devote more of their expenditures to the kinds of extracurricular activities that are so enriching to children and so attractive to parents (see Table B.1).

Let me also spend a moment on two important trends occurring in urban education that bear on state reform and issues of state technical assistance and professional development for city schools, by way of laying additional context. One trend actually grows from the other and they include issues of urban school management downsizing and site-based management and privatization.

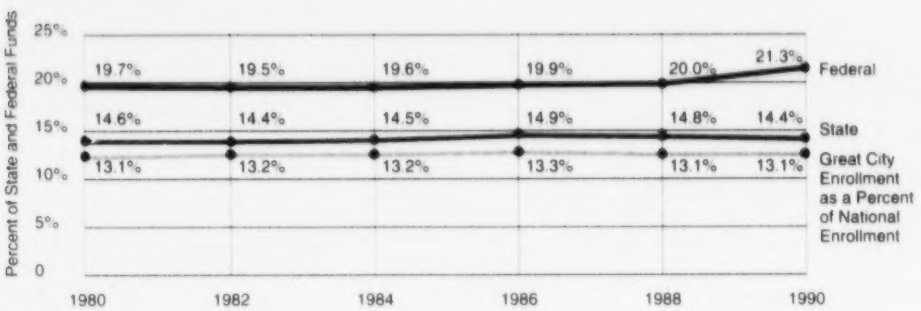
For less than five years, urban school systems have undergone enormous structural changes of their own, largely by themselves. One of the most substantial reforms has involved the downsizing of their central office administrations, as more and more districts experimented with one form or another of site-based management and budgets dictated personnel cuts (see Figure B.5). From these trends has also grown a more substantial willingness—necessity if you will—for attempting experimental privatization plans as a way of squeezing every inadequate dollar for the most it could yield and as a way of compensating for some of the expertise that has been lost in central office personnel cuts.

The challenge for urban school systems now is to modify their central operations into ones that can deliver higher order professional development and technical assistance to their own schools in a context of extreme budget cuts. Yet the cities have lost faith in the states' ability to step in and fill the void.

At this point, given the context that has been described, let me talk about the issues of technical assistance and professional development separately and how the states could be helpful to urban schools on each.

Figure B.3

Great City School Share of State and Federal Elementary and Secondary Expenditures

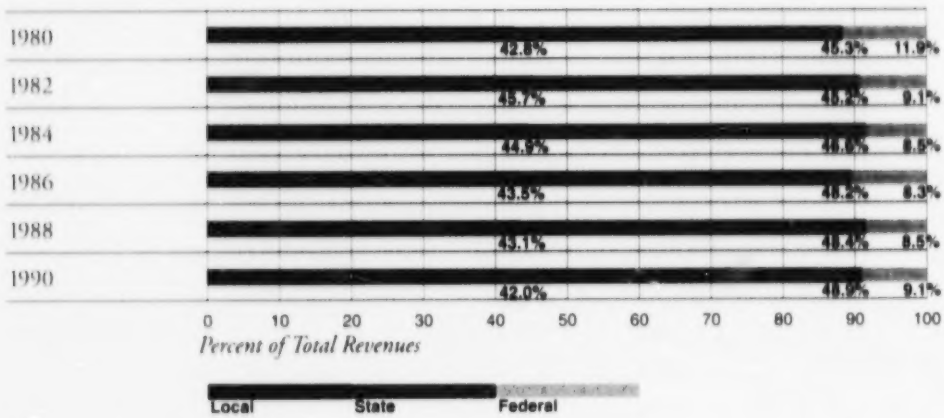


N=47 school districts

Source: Council of the Great City Schools

Figure B.4

Total Revenues of Great City Schools by Source



N=47 school districts

Source: Council of the Great City Schools

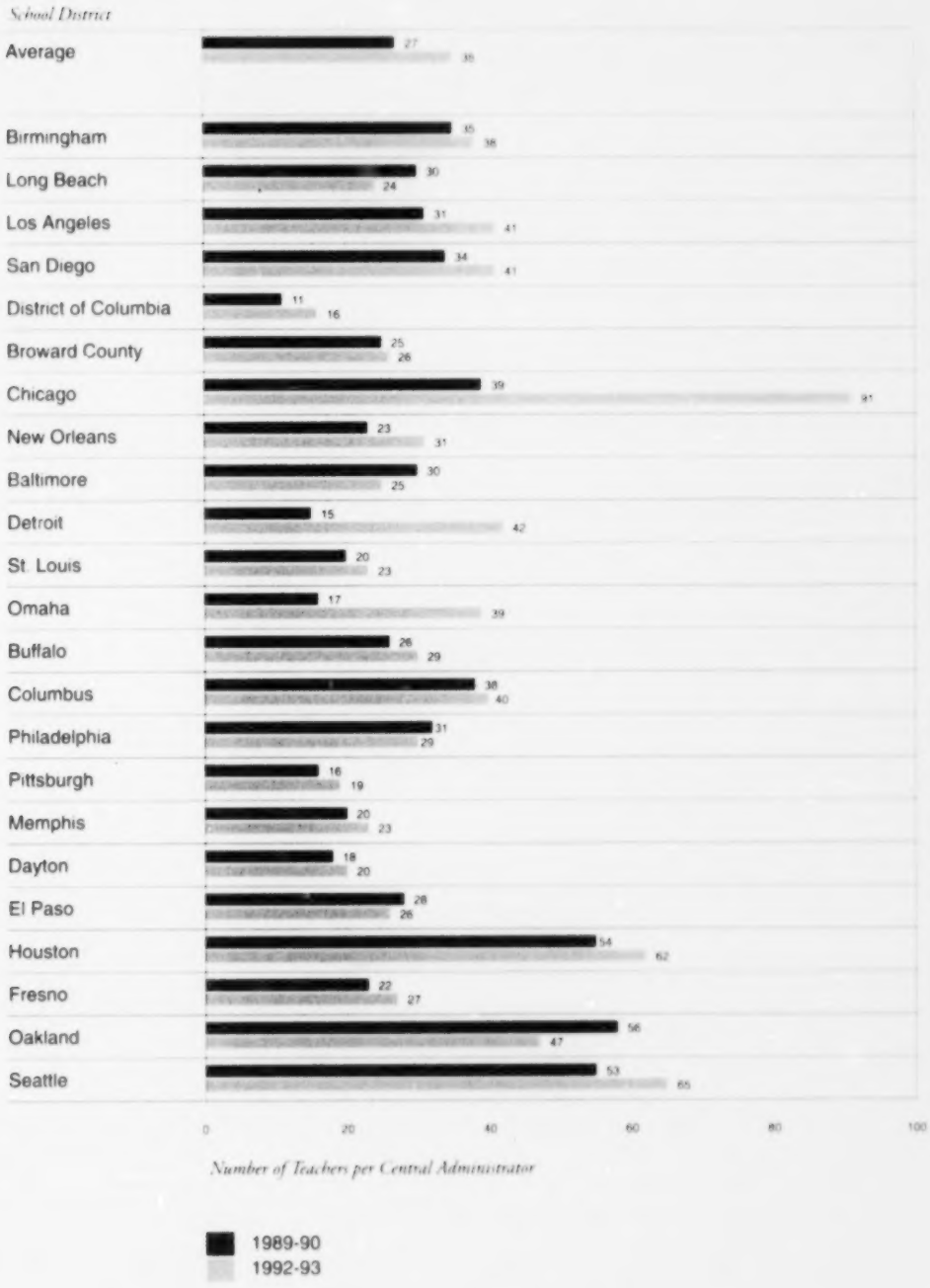
Table B.1

Average Per Pupil Expenditures for Large Urban and Suburban Schools by Function, 1990-91

	Large Urban Schools		*Suburban Schools*	
	Dollars	Percent	Dollars	Percent
Total Instructional Services	$3,223	62.0%	$3,729	61.4%
Classroom Instructional	2,335	44.9	2,749	45.3
Special Education	484	9.3	455	7.5
Books and Materials	101	1.9	147	2.4
Auxiliary Instructional	186	3.6	240	4.0
Improvement and Development of Instruction	102	2.0	83	1.4
Other	15	0.3	55	0.8
Total School Site Administration	$262	5.1%	$295	4.9%
Total Student Services	$358	6.9%	$417	6.9%
Health and Attendance	105	2.0	97	1.6
Transportation	196	3.8	231	3.8
Food Services	25	0.5	10	0.2
Student Extracurricular Activities	17	0.3	62	1.0
Other	15	0.3	17	0.3
Total Board of Education	$21	0.4%	$32	0.5%
Total Superintendent and Executive Administration	$71	1.4%	$99	1.6%
Total Central and Business Services	$184	3.5%	$146	2.4%
Total Maintenance and Operations	$460	8.8%	$481	7.9%
Total Environment, Fuel and Utilities	$120	2.3%	$146	2.4%
Total Other Current Expenditures	$144	2.8%	$208	3.4%
Total Capital Outlay	$220	4.2%	$225	3.7%
Total Debt Retirement	$75	1.4%	$172	2.8%
Total Interest on Debt	$62	1.2%	$122	2.0%
Total Per Pupil Expenditure	$5,200	100.0%	$6,073	100.0%

Source: Council of the Great City Schools and the Educational Research Service

Figure B.5
Great City School Teachers per Central Administrator



Source: Council of the Great City Schools

Technical Assistance

Technical assistance available to the cities is too remote, too rural and suburban focused, and without the quality that most big school systems need, as was discussed earlier. From our vantage point, state offerings of more of the same will not be as helpful as they should be, particularly as the educational world evolves with its new goals and standards.

According to the current trajectory, more state technical assistance is likely to mean simply more monitoring of whether city schools are meeting new standards along the appropriate timetable, particularly if "opportunity-to-learn" standards become translated simply into a set of local inventories. To avoid some of this—again, keeping in mind the lens through which the cities see themselves and the states, let me suggest a number of new approaches that the states might use.

- Both the states and the federal government need to base more of their technical assistance centers and labs in city school systems, not just in cities.

  Currently, there is not a single state or federally funded technical assistance center or lab—even those devoted to at-risk or urban education—located in an urban school system, where research capacities are often singular in the research community. The problem now is not only one of proximity, but personal familiarity with what urban schools really need in the way of help.

- Urban schools ought to be given greater latitude and funding by both the states and federal government to purchase or pursue technical assistance on the open market or from each other.

  The universe from which urban schools now have to select technical assistance in almost every field—except for compliance with federal law, which is often highly skewed by unnecessary state regulation—is extremely narrow. Often, urban school systems will have only passing familiarity with the work of various labs, centers, or university staff, but more intense and trusting relations with other urban schools or with the private sector. Urban schools ought to be able to use those resources they know best.

- The need for and shape of technical assistance at the urban school and district levels ought to be generated mostly from the local level on up.

  The Council of the Great City Schools often hears from its membership that technical assistance from the states is offered to the urban schools in ways, at times, and in forms that are not useful to them but instead are made available according to the timetables of the state department or the balance of the districts in the state. More thought and attention ought to be given at the state level for letting urban schools indicate the form, nature, and timing of their own assistance, if it is needed.

- Much more time, attention, and resources ought to be devoted by the state to developing urban-level capacity for research and technical assistance.

  Urban schools often have research capacities that have rivaled universities, but because of the extraordinary cutbacks in central office administration many urban school research and evaluation efforts have been gutted. Yet the need for urban school research and the ability of urban school central offices to deliver technical assistance to their individual schools has never been at a higher level. Urban schools have never received high-quality technical assistance, nor have they had to deliver it. The state could be helpful to urban schools in at least showing them the way to get started.

- States ought to set up separate units with personnel drawn from the cities to deliver the unique kinds of technical assistance that city schools need.

  The needs that city schools and their children have differ enormously from those of the average, smaller and wealthier school systems in each state. As we have discussed, those needs will range from problems of scale to homelessness, multiculturalism,

teen pregnancy, violence, and many others. Yet the generic technical assistance that states have developed for their school systems appears simplistic and out of touch to those in the cities. Along with strengthening the capacities of city schools to deliver or pursue their own technical assistance, we think it would be helpful for states to form separate urban technical assistance units, staffed not just with those interested and concerned about urban education but with those from urban education itself.

Professional Development

One of the biggest challenges states will face in the future involves the development of state reforms, goals, and standards that have a coherent and comprehensive accompanying plan for professional development for teachers, board members, and administrators. The Clinton administration recognized that need when it recommended replacing the current Chapter 2 program with a national professional development effort.

The administration is on the right track, but the portents of this effort can easily derail at the state and local levels if professional development is left out or it becomes little more than a patchwork of programs rather than a unifying foundation. In other words, state efforts at improving state professional development must serve as a catalyst rather than just a framework. In the old motion picture, "Out of the Past," Robert Mitchum said, "I can see the picture but not the frame." The opposite needs to be seen in efforts at state professional development. The framework for professional development needs to be in total harmony with the standards picture. The following suggestions parallel some of those in the area of technical assistance.

- States need to borrow more from and rely more on urban schools to develop prototypes and models for professional development.

  As has been stated, urban schools are going through an enormous amount of reform on their own, however much credit the states take for it. Much of the ideas and experimentation for that reform is first tested in urban school districts, sometimes at great political risk. If successful, those experiments can often be transferred from the cities to the states more easily than the other way around. Much of the spirit of the reform movement, in fact, is supposed to be locally generated, even though the goals and legislation were set from the state or nation. We think it would be useful for the states to think of the cities as incubators and testing-grounds for ideas, rather than simply as the largest and most troublesome entities within their jurisdictions.

- Urban school districts ought to be given greater latitude by the states to work out alternative credentialing procedures with their local colleges of education or be allowed to credential teachers themselves, also in collaboration with their local colleges of education.

  Teacher shortages in urban schools run about two and one-half times the national average and there is an acute need in urban schools for larger numbers and percents of African American, Hispanic, and Asian-American teachers. Often the credentialing procedures that states use serve as barriers to urban schools rather than as solutions. Standards for teachers entering the field, whether urban or not, should be retained or heightened. Collaborations like those recently developed by the Council of the Great City Schools and the Great City Colleges of Education might be used to develop prototypes.

- Urban schools and state departments of education need to finally get together on the development and implementation of the national voluntary goals and standards.

  For too long, urban schools have been left out of the debate on national standards setting, to the detriment of the states, the cities, the federal government, business, and the academic community. The lack of cross-pollination—if it continues—will make it very difficult for city schools to tailor standards to their own unique settings and will likely set them up for failure, making it nearly impossible for the nation at large to meet the National Education Goals.

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- **Urban schools need greater flexibility from their states to pursue or to receive professional development in areas such as multicultural and multiracial affairs, portfolio assessments, conflict resolution, language development, and other issues that arise from the extraordinary diversity of the cities.**

  The wide variety of needs unique to the cities, or at least more concentrated in the cities, ought to be part of each urban school system's professional development portfolio. Sometimes, however, these areas are given short shrift or are ignored entirely in generic state professional development efforts. Using the cities, not as advisors, but as partners in statewide professional development efforts would help.

We have tried in this brief paper to give some of the perspective on state reform, with special emphasis on technical assistance and professional development. The subject is obviously more complex and extensive than we could describe within the space limitations. What the Great City Schools need most from their states, besides adequate funding, is a genuine collaboration and a set of state policies and practices that take into account that urban schools are different, not just bigger. Statewide efforts that begin to parallel those at the federal level by CDC and NSF would be good models to follow.

Urban schools, for their part, need all the help they can get and are evermore open to receiving it. How to put the expertise and capacities of the cities and the states together for mutual benefit, and the benefit of the country, will be our biggest challenge. Our orbits need to be put into synchrony.

An Analysis of Survey Data on the Transformation of State Departments of Education

by John T. MacDonald, Council of Chief State School Officers

The Council of Chief State School officers has conducted a survey of the states to determine the status of systemic reform planning and implementation. The survey data were collated and analyzed during the months of October through December 1993. A report, *State Systemic Education Planning—Status in Your State*, was then drafted to depict state reform status relative to the requirements of Title III of the Goals 2000: Educate America Act.

Relative to the transformation of state departments of education, information derived from the survey indicates that state departments are changing the form and function of their organizational structures to lead, guide, and support state systemic reform initiatives at district and school levels. To date, forty-two states indicate that they either have started or have recently completed the reorganization (line and staff relationships by role, function, and responsibility) at their state departments of education. Of the other eight states, three report that they have not reorganized, three did not respond to the survey section on state department of education reorganization, and two states did not respond to the survey.

The driving impetus for state department of education reorganization stems from chief state school officers' recommendations to state boards of education to reorganize departments to support state and local district reform initiatives. This action has occurred in thirty-five states to date. Of the thirty-five states, fifteen—Alaska, Alabama, California, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Louisiana, Michigan, New York, North Carolina, North Dakota, Vermont, Washington, Wisconsin, and Wyoming—report that budget and state personnel reductions have played a role in providing the impetus for change. Three states indicate that their reorganization initiatives were prompted by an order of the Governor, and two report reorganizing because of legislative action. Kentucky is an example of the latter.

The primary rationale for changing the form and function of state departments of education from monitoring to service and technical assistance is support for educational reform. Eighteen states report that their reorganization of state staff resources will provide direct services to local school district efforts through the formation of operational components such as cross-cutting field service teams; assignment of state staff to local district school improvement teams; use of local district staff in conjunction with state staff in the development of standards and assessments; and use of state-supported and state-staffed regional instructional services and support centers, such as the eight operating in Kentucky or Florida's School Improvement Service Unit established in the state department of education to coordinate and facilitate reform efforts in the twelve regions of the state.

After years of working in a hierarchical organizational structure, many state department of education staff are not prepared to undertake the role and function changes required for operating systemically. Few have ever experienced the structural requirements of working

"across the system" or, more important, the changes this means to the behavior and attitude of state staff in their relationships with both internal and external "customers." States recognize this as an organizational dilemma that must be worked at "long and hard" over an extended period. Changing structures and personal relationships to enable working across the organization to better align roles and functions requires behavioral and attitudinal changes among career personnel. To accomplish this, five states are using a "quality management" approach as the vehicle to make the necessary changes in the ways their respective state departments of education relate both internally and externally to support and sustain district site-based initiatives that require shared decisionmaking, risk taking, and deregulation of the state bureaucracy. South Carolina has established six total quality education coordinating councils to develop strategic plans for meeting the National Education Goals. There is one council for each congressional district assigned to review South Carolina's barriers to educational progress, identify resources, develop strategies, and promote coordination of efforts.

Decentralization of state human and material resources tends to be the key strategy employed by chief state school officers to support state and local district reform initiatives. A parallel strategy involves role changes for state department of education staff personnel. For the most part, the changes involve staff formulation and service on cross-cutting teams that include local staff and community workers as well as staff from other agencies such as health and welfare. New Mexico, Ohio, and Oregon are current state examples of such decentralization and collaboration. However, states such as North Carolina and Wisconsin are using other approaches to support local reform initiatives through regional service units.

North Carolina's six new technical assistance centers were reorganized from eight regional education centers in 1990. They are responsible for delivering staff development for teachers and administrators that is specific to the improvement of student performance. These centers focus on training specific to instructional alternatives; learning styles; developing, analyzing, and utilizing data in making instructional decisions; curriculum alignment; developing instructional guides; and monitoring student progress along with content-specific training. North Carolina's major funding initiatives have included nearly $32 million for career development. The state's School Improvement and Accountability Act also includes a waiver of state regulations for local district plans for improving student performance. Finally, North Carolina reports that the technical assistance centers will receive additional staff and the program services will be organized to reflect local school needs.

Wisconsin's state department of education is reorganizing through the formation of state action teams. The state has legislation that requires a support rather than a monitoring relationship for the state department of education with local districts. Wisconsin Act 39 included a provision requiring the department of public instruction to develop a procedure under which school districts could request permission to comply in an alternative manner with any of the state's school district standards. In 1992-93, state legislation required that school boards and administrators appoint representatives to a broad-based panel consisting of teachers and parents of each school to participate in the development of management restructuring programs designed to decentralize school board powers and duties and foster shared decisionmaking. Also in 1992-93, the state department of education conducted training sessions in each of the county educational service agencies for each of the broad-based panels. Under the program, $500,000 in grants were awarded to support implementation of the restructuring programs. In addition, the department has available $1.2 million for local district staff development and $158,000 for state staff development activities.

State department of education involvement in professional development activities increasingly is a result of systemic reform plans that include changes, revisions, and rewriting of

teacher certification, recertification, program approval, and continuing education standards. In response to the survey question, "Do any anticipated changes in licensing standards require changes in teacher education and how do you plan to implement these changes?", thirty-five states said "yes." Five states indicate that their licensure revisions would not change teacher education, four states report that they are not revising licensure standards, and four states did not respond to this section of the survey. States are implementing the changes to move toward more of a performance or outcomes-based system and support such a system in a variety of ways. State examples include the following.

California. Legislation is being pursued to allow multiple routes for university-based teacher education program approval based on performance standards and not specifying courses. The proposed legislation includes National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, state program approval, and institution-based alternatives.

Delaware. The state department of education reports that it is developing an Educational Plan for Professional Competency that includes performance assessment near the end of the teacher induction process. It is reviewing models from the Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium, the Educational Testing Service PRAXIS exam, and the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards.

Florida. Florida's state systemic reform initiative, Blue Print 2000, is being linked to a new learning support system jointly sponsored by the legislature, the state department of education, local school districts, and Florida State University's Center for Educational Technology. The new program, School Year 2000, is part of a large-scale, systemic, and comprehensive plan to increase the productivity of students through the development and implementation of a technology-based schooling system. Children ages three through seven are targeted for phase one, with other age groups to follow in successive years.

Kentucky. The state now assesses classroom performance during a one-year internship in which the teacher candidate is evaluated using a standardized observation system by a three-member team. The system is being reviewed in order to alter the observation and evaluation components. Kentucky's Education Professional Standards Board plans to transform the state's licensing, program approval, and internship system to an outcomes-based system by 1996.

Massachusetts. Legislation is being considered to place standards for training, inservice education, and supervision of the state's teachers under the auspices of the commissioner of education. Local districts attempting to employ teachers will be required to submit a Provisional Education Program Plan for the continuing education of teachers. Teachers at the "provisional" and "standard" certificate levels will be licensed for a five-year period subject to review prior to recertification. All teacher candidates must have graduated from an accredited college or university with a degree in the arts or sciences.

Minnesota. The state department of education is cooperating with the Educational Testing Service in the development and field testing of the PRAXIS III-Classroom Performance System. The board of teaching is authorized to develop and adopt a classroom performance system. Between 1991 and 1995, Minnesota teacher education programs must implement a research-based, results-oriented curriculum that focuses on the skills teachers need to be effective.

A key issue for state departments of education in the immediate future—as they move to an outcomes-based teacher preparatory and continuing education system—is how the states will administer the transition from the paper-and-pencil testing systems currently in place for certification and recertification. Although the state examples above indicate movement toward performance-based systems, and there are many more state initiatives that could be highlighted, the current teacher testing programs still remain unchanged. Currently, thirty-one states indicate that they do have or are using some form of testing licensure, twelve

states indicate that they do not, and the others are silent on the issue. State departments of education are going to be challenged on this issue as they attempt to align state teacher preservice and certification reforms that are standards-based on content, student/teacher performance, and student/teacher outcomes-based assessments. The coordination problems of aligning content standards with improved instructional practice issues alone are enormous. As an example, if one compares the current status of content standards with performance standards, the development, coordination, and alignment issues become more clear and reveal just how much work needs to be done by state departments of education (see Table B.2).

Of the twenty-one states that indicate having content standards ready for implementation, fifteen also report having performance standards ready to go. This finding is only one indication of the many huge tasks that lie ahead for state departments of education to meet the requirements of state systemic reform plans as contained in the Goals 2000 legislation. If state departments of education are to be successful in their endeavors to support the transformation of public education envisioned by the Goals 2000: Educate America Act and in the Elementary and Secondary School Act (ESEA) reauthorization of Hawkins-Stafford, much more federal and state attention has to be paid to building greater state capacity. For example, as indicated in the report, fifteen states report that reorganization is due in part to budget and staff reductions. This number probably is higher than the fifteen states reporting. In fact, more states are known to the author that could be added to the list. Currently, Congress is considering further cutbacks to state education agencies' administrative setasides as part of the reauthorization of ESEA. If allowed to stand, the Chapter 2 reduction from 20 percent to 15 percent or 10 percent will further reduce the number of state instructional support personnel at a time when their services are most needed to support state and local reform initiatives. Governors and legislatures should be sensitive to the need to support adequate federal and state funding for state education agencies to ensure that the necessary state capacity is in place to enable the reforms to go forward.

Table B.2

States Ready to Implement Content and Performance Standards as of August 1994

Content Standards

Status: Ready for Implementation

Alabama	Michigan
Arizona	Montana
Arkansas	New Mexico
California	North Carolina
Hawaii	North Dakota
Illinois	Ohio
Indiana	Nevada
Kansas	Tennessee
Kentucky	Utah
Louisiana	West Virginia
Maryland	

21 States

Performance Standards

Status: Ready for Implementation

Arkansas	New York
California	North Carolina
Illinois	Ohio
Indiana	Oklahoma
Kentucky	Rhode Island
Louisiana	South Carolina
Maryland	Tennessee
Minnesota	West Virginia
Montana	Wisconsin

18 States

Other state policy structures also should come under review by Governors and their agencies to ensure that the same level of flexibility afforded local districts is available to their respective state agencies. State personnel policies and contracts are good places to start if agencies are going to gain better control over the employment, training, and deployment of career personnel.

In summary, state departments of education are rapidly transforming their organizational structures and external relationships with local school districts and other human service agencies. What is noticeable, however, is that the vast majority of agencies are making the changes with little help from sources of state support. If state departments of education are to be successful in their endeavors to support the transformation of public education envisioned by the Goals 2000 legislation and the ESEA reauthorization of Hawkins-Stafford, much has to be done in the area of state capacity building in the areas of instructional staff, expertise, state and local professional development, standards and assessment development, technology, networking, and technical assistance support.

Although one can see recent efforts to build cooperative alliances and linkages among local, state, and federal agencies, even more has to be done if states are to have the full range of human and material resources available for their use in motivating, supporting, and sustaining the kind of reform espoused by the Goals 2000 legislation. An amalgam needs to be forged between the National Governors' Association, the National Conference of State Legislatures, the National Association of State Boards of Education, and the Council of Chief State School Officers to bring this point home at the national policy level if the states are to have a real "shot" at bringing the reform initiatives to fruition. It is going to take many more resources to do the full job than are now being made available to the state education agencies for the present and foreseeable future.

About the Authors

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